

The following Sermon was preached in the London Mission Chapel at this place on the forenoon of Sabbath, April 12th, 1857, a few days after receipt of the melancholy tidings of the death of the Rev. Dr. Medhurst in England. The service was commenced by the Rev. Alex. Williamson with devotional exercises. In the Evening the Rev. Griffith John preached a Sermon at the same place, in which sympathising allusion was also made to the event.

Shanghae, April 14th, 1857.

THE PARTING CHARGE.

A SERMON

PREACHED IN COMMEMORATION OF THE DEATH

OF

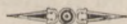
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BY

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LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

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NORTH-CHINA HERALD OFFICE, SHANGHAE,

1857.

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THE PARTING CHARGE.

A SERMON.

CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,—We meet to-day in mournful circumstances. For several months we have been deprived of the presence of one, with whom most of us were acquainted, and some of us were for a long time intimately associated. Yet we cherished the hope of his return to our midst, and looked with interest and anxiety for the tidings of his arrival in his native land, in health and strength. The painful news, however, have reached our ears, that our dear friend is no more on the earth,—never again shall we behold his face in the flesh;—He will not return to us, but we shall go to him. On the first receipt of the news, we find it difficult to repress our feelings or collect our thoughts, so as rightly to record our deep sense of the loss, which we in common with a wide circle of friends, and the cause of Christ in China have thus sustained. We crave your indulgence, while we endeavour to express our first views and feelings on the event, and elicit some of the lessons it is calculated to impart. In relation to the cause with which our departed friend was so long and closely connected, and in the promotion of which he laboured so actively and efficiently, the bereavement is suggestive of many useful and important observations; and were we to select a passage of Scripture, that most fully expressed the characteristic and aim of his life-long labours, and the warmest desires of his heart in reference to those whom he has left behind in this mission field, we believe it would be found in our Saviour's last parting charge to his disciples,—

GO YE INTO ALL THE WORLD, AND PREACH THE GOSPEL
TO EVERY CREATURE.—*Mark*, 16. 16.

Such is the language which we seem to hear addressed to us, on the demise of every faithful servant of Christ. Though called himself to lay aside his armour, he earnestly exhorts those who remain to buckle it on, and manfully and vigorously to employ it.

A consideration of the import of these glowing words, and the bearing of them on the course and conduct of our departed friend, will we think form a suitable improvement of the afflictive event, that now lies heavily on our hearts. Nothing in life was capable of affording him more satisfaction and joy, than the wide-spread preaching of the Gospel; nothing more cheered him in death, than the prospect of China being opened, as a result of present occurrences, in order that the glorious Gospel might be proclaimed all abroad; and now as we trust he is before the throne, through the infinite and adorable righteousness of his blessed Lord, nothing on earth, we believe, would more augment his happiness, than the contemplation of those whom he has left behind, diligently and devotedly heralding the tidings of mercy to the multitudes inhabiting this vast and populous Empire. Though deprived of the counsel and aid of an able, esteemed and beloved coadjutor in the service of Christ, we would not spend our time in vain lamentation, or useless inquiries into the mysterious Providence of God, or sorrow as those who have no hope, or allow our hands to hang down and our knees to become feeble. But while keenly alive to the severity of the stroke, we would gird up the loins of our mind, and seek to improve the distressing event, by urging on ourselves and our brethren in the mission field, the due discharge of that great work which our dear friend so actively and unremittingly pursued. The thought that such a course on the present occasion, would of all others most approve itself to him, determines our adoption of it, while it is in our estimation, the highest commendatory and commemorative tribute we could render to his venerated name. The question, then is,—How may the interests of our holy Christianity be best and most effectually promoted in this land?—What is the nature and requirement of that Gospel which it is the grand duty of Christian Missionaries to proclaim to its teeming millions?—How, in a word, may the ministry of life and peace with which we are charged be most availingly and impressively communicated to the people by whom we are surrounded? Take the terms of the original Commission, and consider how it is to be carried out.—Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.

We observe, in passing, that we do not consider ourselves called upon to sustain the principles and obligations of the Missionary enterprize. The very attempt to do this, especially on the

present occasion, were to insinuate that it needed to be done, and to derogate from the incomparable grandeur and excellence of the cause, which we are all presumed to admit,—in view of its express Divine Authority, the benevolence and blessedness of its designs, and the superior intelligence and moral worth of many connected with it. Such a treatment of the subject, as we propose, will we conceive reflect a higher degree of honor on the cause itself, and on the character of him whose long identification with it forms his most distinguished memorial. We take these words also, as representing the duty and conduct of every faithful Missionary of Jesus Christ, so far as he finds opportunity, and in this light we proceed to consider them.

1. *Go and preach the Gospel in all its fulness of blessing.*—It is the announcement of glad tidings. It proclaims pardon, peace and eternal life,—and to whom? to us as sinners, helpless, wretched and undone. Our true condition is clearly revealed and confirmed by many irrefragable proofs, and the good news concerning Christ meet us accordingly. However abject and extreme our case may be,—and who can estimate it aright?—yet the glorious Gospel of the Blessed God presents a balm for every wound, a solace for every sorrow. There is no moral misery too intense for it to alleviate, no sinner too vile to whom it does not offer pardon. It is in name, character and effect the Gospel of salvation. Altogether it is full of blessing, at once in virtue of the source whence it originates, the means by which it was brought into existence, the manner in which it was communicated, the purport of its sacred truths, and their influence on the heart and mind of multitudes in every age. And it is the Gospel in this point of view, that we are called to preach to those around us. Give it to them, in all its fulness, and in all its fulness of blessing. There is doubt and uncertainty connected with their own religious systems, as to the advantages accruing from them, and these at the best are acknowledged or are appreciated only in a temporal aspect; but the Gospel which we are commissioned to preach is fraught with blessings of a far higher, a spiritual and eternal kind, and when exhibited in an interesting intelligible manner, with a full array of the evidences of their Divinity, they cannot fail to attract and impress. Let there be no hesitation, then, no reserve on this point; but realizing the blessings of Christianity ourselves, and enlightened as to their adaptation to the wants of the most wretched and

miserable of our race,—Go and preach it. Let your illustrations of its superabounding grace be as expressive and comprehensive, as language can possibly admit of, regulated by a due regard to truth and propriety,—they will still be far from exhausting the fulness contained in the blessing of salvation. Let your hearers distinctly and definitely understand what is to be gained by the Gospel you announce, what are the advantages connected with it, and there is *that* in the mere enumeration of them, which will not fail, through the influence of the Spirit of God, to draw all hearts to the Saviour.

2. *Go and preach the Gospel in all its freeness and universality.* The command is—Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. In regard to this great Commission, no embargo is to be laid on its gracious terms, and no limit to be set to its wide and universal application. All are, and all are equally to be, invited to the marriage-feast. No distinction of colour, language, creed or clime is to obtain in the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ, and no difference is to be made between rich and poor, young and old, learned and unlearned, Jew and Gentile, bond and free. Glorious doctrine! It contains a fulness of blessing, and blessing appropriate and free to all. There is none more welcome than another to the participation of pardon, peace and eternal life, except it may be in the case of those who more particularly feel their need, and most earnestly desire the gift. Oh! let all who listen to the Word understand this special characteristic of Gospel grace. Announce its freeness in the freest manner. Make use of the most parallel and impressive instances in this respect. Take the light of heaven, or the air we breathe, or the water of the broad-rolling stream, and such illustrations even will fail to convey a full idea of the infinite and unrestricted freeness of the blessings of salvation. Whatever is intended or determined in the eternal purposes of God, it has nothing to do with our declaration of the Gospel message, and an honest and conscientious offer of its blessings to every man, woman and child throughout this wide world. Reserve or restraint on this point is utterly inconsistent with the terms of the great Commission, and where the Missionary is actuated by any such consideration in inviting sinners to be saved, he so far departs in spirit and in action from the command of the Saviour, the example of the Apostles, and abates from the influence and utility of his own Christian ministrations. Be sincere and

honest in your invitations to the marriage. Exhort all bad and good to repent and believe the Gospel. Open your hearts in the exercise of your high and holy calling, and while a greater amount of pleasure and satisfaction will flow through your own souls in consequence, a greater amount of practical good will also be the legitimate result.

3. *Go and preach the Gospel clearly and explicitly.*—By this I mean,—make known its great facts in the most obvious and intelligible manner. Let none of its main truths be beclouded in your own minds or in the view of others. The purity and holiness of God, human guilt, depravity and helplessness, the Divinity and work of Christ, the influence of the Spirit, and all the other leading doctrines of the Christian scheme require to be plainly and constantly stated and enforced. There is a danger of our dwelling much on general topics, such as those around us are naturally acquainted with, or that are not the specific and peculiar subjects of the Christian system. When this is done,—and we fear it has been done too much,—we derogate greatly from the design and duties of our sacred office, lead the heathen to suppose there is a perfect or close similarity between our holy religion and their own, and reflect proportionate dishonour on Him whose name we bear. It behoves us, observe, to preach *the Gospel, the Gospel of glad tidings*, of pardon to the guilty, peace to the disconsolate, life to the spiritually dead,—to preach it, too, in such a manner, that in no way and at no time, the heathen may find occasion to identify our doctrine with their own. However apparently similar in some of its moral exhortations, Christianity may be to the creed of China,—in their motive principle and in grand general outline, we know the two to be wide as the poles asunder; and there is room, ample room for the Missionary to dilate on the absolute and peculiar character of the Christian scheme, so that the heathen mind will at once perceive a marked and entire difference between his sentiments and ours. For this end, we urge it on ourselves and on our Missionary brethren to make the Gospel a plain and certain matter. Let there be no clinging to Chinese manner and maxims, such as would hinder in effect the Gospel of Christ. Employ the most apposite and intelligible mode of speech, that would convey a correct and clear understanding of the truth as it is in Jesus. Never let a congregation or a single individual if possible hear us, without enabling them to form a distinct and

definite idea of our great object. If from want of language, we cannot dwell in detail on the grand topics of our holy religion, let us at all events avoid giving "an uncertain sound." Aim not at a magniloquent and florid style, at a mere parade of words, at impressing the people with the knowledge that we have of their language;—in short, aim at nothing else than the clear and simple exposition of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and it will be a far greater reward to find that the heathen understand you on this point, than to have the whole congregation complimenting you on your colloquial ease and facility.

4. *Go and preach the Gospel with directness and point.*—That Divine system of truth consists of both duties and privileges, blessings and requirements, the one to be enjoyed and the other to be obeyed, and the latter is to be insisted on, as the former is to be offered to all. It is well that we have manifold opportunities for making known to this people the word of Life, but it is necessary that we should directly and pointedly bring before them, what they are to do in regard to it. They hear the joyful sound in great multitudes, but they leave without any certain definite impression, it may be from the fact of their not being positively told their immediate duty in reference to the subject. Now the Commission of Christ is sufficiently decided. All nations were to be called to become His disciples, the method to be adopted is prescribed, and His followers with the Divine Commission in their hands, are ever to keep this one end in view. In every sermon we preach, in every discourse we have with the people, we are to aim at their becoming His disciples, and everything is to be made to bend to this great object. As His followers, as those whom He has appointed to this special work, we have nothing else to do. Simply look at the result contemplated and the means laid down for its attainment, and act accordingly. Let both be urged on our hearers by every possible consideration. To speak to them in a mere general way of Christianity, with nothing to infix the truth, the whole truth in their minds, with nothing certain insisted on as to what they ought to do in the matter, the entire subject readily drops out of view; and they are neither in the way of being impressed as they might have been, nor is the load of responsibility imposed on them as was designed, from their very first hearing of the Gospel of Christ. Let there be, then, a directness and point in all our appeals to those around us. Let repentance, faith and

the profession of Christianity be urgently insisted on, and let them see clearly what they ought at once to do. The ordeal enjoined by our Lord in becoming a disciple is a serious thing, in the view of many candid hearers of the Gospel. They observe that to receive Christian baptism, is to come under a solemn obligation to conform to all the requirements of our holy religion, and they are unwilling to assume the badge of discipleship in a light and frivolous manner. The Saviour knowing this yet appointed it, and charged his apostles to require it in connection with repentance and faith, promising that only in so far as the rite was solemnly and cheerfully submitted to would the individual be saved. Keep to the terms of the original Commission, and it will be found in every way adapted to the intention of our Lord, to enlighten the nations in the path of duty, to lead them to decide for Christ, and to confirm the recipients in the faith and profession of Christianity.

5. *Go and preach the Gospel with earnestness and affection.*—There is in the character of the Gospel, the consideration of its gracious origin, the blessed effects of it on ourselves, and its design in relation to others, *that* which should intensely excite us to such a state of mind and action. The subject in the transcendent interest and importance of it, and its influence on our hearts and prospects, ought to and naturally will awaken in us this feeling. Whereinsoever our own souls are warmed and cheered by the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory, it will appear in the fervour and anxiety with which we speak to others on the subject. Christianity in its practical influence is no formal lifeless thing. It is lively, energetic and active. The man who has come to the apprehension of its motive power will understand and commend the conduct of others animated by it, which to the men of the world appears to be the result only of fanaticism or insanity. The love of Christ constraineth us,—For me to live is Christ, is no strange unreasonable idea, but to one acquainted with the principles at work, capable of easy solution, consistent with the highest reason, and alone worthy of admiration and praise. In the proportion in which we are distinguished by this principle, it will be evinced in our Missionary labours, both in their character and extent. Our announcements of the Gospel scheme will not be any dry formal thing, but replete with interest and with proof of reality, in the view of those around us. We shall speak from the heart to the heart, and our very

manner will shew that we desire what we profess, and that its influence over ourselves is appropriate to the spirit and requirements of the great theme. Coldness and indifference on our part, would not only hinder its operation on the minds of others, but appear strangely inconsistent with the subject itself; and hence it behoves us to feel and manifest the zeal, earnestness and affectionate solicitude for the welfare of our hearers, which the spirit and practical influence of the Gospel demand. To make it prevail in their case, there must be evident proof of its prevalence and power over ourselves. And further, such an experimental acquaintance with the Gospel of Christ, will lead us to understand and sympathize in the terms of the Commission,—Go, and disciple all nations,—Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. The earnestness implied finds an appropriate sphere only in the universality here enjoined. Though not able to exemplify itself, or comply with this requirement to the full extent in each individual case, it is enough that the charge is appreciated and a correspondence in sentiment and desire is felt with its utmost latitude of meaning. The man so influenced delights in the widest diffusion of Christian truth, and would gladly aid in its diffusion all over the earth. Activity and energy in spreading the Gospel are thus characteristics intended in the Commission of our Lord, and find their appropriate counterpart in the breast and conduct of every right-minded and faithful Missionary. His prayers, his efforts, his anxieties find their adequate expression only in the length and breadth of the Saviour's last command, and the more it is carried out by himself or others, it forms the occasion of his warmest thanksgiving and praise.

6. *Go and preach the Gospel with solemnity and seriousness.*—The subject requires it. Its relations and bearing are of a momentous and solemn kind. It refers not so much to the body as to the soul, not so much to time as to eternity. Its great purport is to deliver men from the power and pollution of sin, to restore us to the Divine favor, to rescue us from everlasting misery and woe, and raise us to the enjoyment of everlasting life and happiness in heaven. “There is no other name by which we can be saved.” “How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?” “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned.” “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, but how shall they hear without a

preacher?" "Unto us is committed the ministry of reconciliation." "We are ambassadors for Christ." Momentous office!—and how eventful the duties connected with it! On our making known the message with which we are intrusted, and on the manner in which it is communicated by us, depend most serious and solemn results. It is more than a question of life and death. The issues of eternity are hanging upon it. How otherwise then should we preach the Gospel, than endeavour to impress our hearers with a sense of its infinite and everlasting consequences? Frivolity, carelessness, negligence on our part, were an evil of tremendous magnitude. The sight of it were enough to make "angels weep," and its effects on the poor heathen, how fearful in the extreme! In their own minds and all around them, there are numberless temptations to indifference and unconcern, and how sad if they should be sustained in this state of things, by what they see in us! That were a calamity worse than all, for otherwise they might be awakened from their sleep of sin and led to flee from the wrath to come. O brethren! let this matter suitably affect our minds, and constrain us to prosecute the work assigned us with becoming seriousness and solemnity. May we preach the Gospel as dying men to dying men, with a due sense of its overwhelming importance in relation to their eternal well-being, and may we through infinite grace succeed in impressing them with the reality of those great and momentous truths, we are commanded to make known to them.

7, and lastly. *Go and preach the Gospel with prayerfulness, and in lively dependance on the Holy Spirit.*—What is the end contemplated by our great work? The conversion and salvation of this heathen people.—And this we know is attainable only by the special influence of God's Spirit on the means employed. Vain are all these means and efforts without accompanying Divine agency, and that ministry will assuredly be most largely blest, where that agency is most fully acknowledged and most earnestly desired. Christ on finishing his commission to the Apostles said, "And lo! I am with you alway even unto the end of the world." This promise was designed to encourage to the discharge of the trust reposed in them, and to assure them of its final and absolute success. The Missionary then in seeking to observe the solemn charge, should ever keep in mind the promise annexed to it, as a thing in which he is deeply interested, and for whose accomplishment he is earnestly and anxiously to look.

Our oversight of this promise is certain to damp our zeal and courage, or if these are maintained, we fear that the motive power cannot be such as we are alone warranted to cherish. We are to live in daily expectation of its being fulfilled, and that in the proportion in which we faithfully preach the Gospel. To make our ministry in this land a real and effectual one, the state of mind implied in the anticipation of this promise being fulfilled is indispensable;—we must cultivate a spirit of prayer and dependance on God for success. Let this be our prevailing characteristic, an actual and earnest thing in our experience and conduct,—and then we may confidently expect Divine influences to descend on our preaching, “like rain upon the mown grass, and showers that water the earth,”—there would be “times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord,”—the breath of Heaven would breathe throughout this vast valley of vision, “full of dry bones,”—multitudes would be imbued with life and energy from on high, and many would be “added to the church of such as shall be saved.”

Such my Christian Brethren are, I believe, some of the views that deeply animated our departed friend, in relation to the great work to which he was devoted, during the long period of forty years; and I have been more explicit in referring to the subject, not only on its own account, but that you might rightly estimate the character and conduct of the man, and apprehend the important lessons which his lamented death suggest to us. In reference to him it may truly be said, that “a great and good man has fallen in Israel.” We are not disposed nor called upon to note in detail, the various excellences by which he was distinguished, or to sustain the world-wide reputation he so deservedly enjoyed. “His praise is in all the churches.” It is our duty only, now that his work is done, and that he has entered on his reward, to notice a few of those marked and special characteristics, that so much adorned his life and labours, with a view, not to unavailing eulogy on him, but to shew their practical bearing and to elicit their appropriate influence in regard to ourselves.

We note his energy, activity and diligence in Missionary work. In preaching the Gospel he was preeminent. The amount of his labours in this respect alone was extraordinary. Even when other important Missionary duties lay heavily upon him, during nearly the whole period of our acquaintance with him, he never relaxed in this department. In the city and the country, in the chapels

and the crowded thoroughfares, on the Sabbath and on the weekdays, he was assiduous in his endeavours to proclaim the Word of Life. And in his case, preaching the Gospel was not a duty performed in a careless perfunctory manner, but a matter into which he threw his whole soul, and in which he felt the greatest interest and delight. In the work of itinerating for this purpose, he accomplished no inconsiderable amount of even physical labour. He prosecuted it far and near with an astonishing degree of even youthful vigour and energy. During the first years of his residence at this port, he was,—in concert with another fellow-labourer,—accustomed to perambulate the surrounding towns and cities, largely distributing religious books and preaching to the people. In this way and by means of his more stated labours in the neighbourhood, he became widely known, so that his very name forms to the present day a general cognomen for all Missionaries throughout an extensive tract of country. Subsequently, when the field of labour was thought to be more open, he was ever ready in suggesting new modes of operation, and spheres of usefulness, for those directly associated with him, while he himself was the first to lead the way. Many of these Missionary tours will long be remembered with interest, by some who were privileged to be engaged with him, and it will be ever pleasing for them to revert in thought, to the zeal and activity he displayed, in proclaiming the message of salvation wherever he went.

We note his extensive knowledge of the Chinese language and literature. This might in some degree have been expected from his long and diligent study of it, but it is very seldom the case, that even a proportion of the time he was permitted to labour, promises such an enlarged and available acquaintance with the subject on the part of others. He was from the commencement of his residence in the East, a laborious student, and acquired an unwonted facility and familiarity with both the spoken and written forms of this difficult language; while his information on the literature and philosophy of the country was highly and justly commended, as well by native as by foreign scholars.

We note his valuable translatorial labours. These it is in our view impossible to over-estimate. Passing over many smaller productions in the way of books and tracts, the part he took in the retranslation of the Sacred Scriptures, will perpetuate and embalm his name in connection with Chinese evangelization. It was a

happy thing that both the Old and New Testaments were continuously proceeded with by those engaged in the work, as the able assistance of our lamented friend was then at hand, and heartily proffered for its accomplishment. As it now is, we see that had the revision of the Old Testament especially been postponed only a few years, his invaluable aid would have been wanting, and the accomplishment of the work in its present beautiful and idiomatic style, would have long been a desideratum,—an impossibility. These sacred volumes in Chinese will be a lasting memorial of his scholarship and ability, and by them he “though dead,” will continue to speak to multitudes of this people, to the latest period of time. In his other routine duties he was no less diligent and laborious. Well has he sustained his name in connexion with those who preceded him. Morrison, Milne and Medhurst,—each a host in himself,—form a phalanx of mighty men in connexion with the Chinese Mission, that reflects the highest honor on the cause, and on the Society that sent them forth. They have now all closed their earthly career, and it becomes those who remain, to offer a due meed of praise, to men who have labored so efficiently and so well, for the spiritual good of this great land. When shall we see the like again?

We note the fervour and spirituality of his prayers. He was eminently advanced and advancing in this frame of mind, and the more so it seemed to us, as he was drawing near the close of his residence in China. The bereavements he was called to sustain, the afflictions that he felt coming upon himself, and the more serious aspect he was led to take of things generally, made it appear as if he felt his end approaching, and imparted a solemnity, an earnestness and a heavenliness to his devotions, that often deeply impressed us. Alike at the domestic altar and at the social meeting, have we witnessed this holy characteristic; and the remembrance of it will be cherished by us and many besides, with sacred interest and pleasure.

We note, once more, his kind and affable disposition. We speak from long and intimate experience on this head. From his many years residence and labours as a Christian Missionary, it might be supposed that he would look for more than an ordinary amount of deference and respect, in the case of those associated with him, but who were so far below him in age and position. And doubtless he did receive it at their hands, but it was tendered not so much

from their feeling that he was in the circumstances naturally entitled to it, but from the kind, encouraging, considerate manner, in which he acted towards them. There was no assumption on his part, and the humblest unpretending fellow-labourer felt himself at ease in his presence. He might appear distant and reserved to a stranger, but the feeling was more in that individual's own mind, from his previous ideas of the man;—on further acquaintance with him, it was found that he was marked by an unwonted degree of mildness, blandness and openness, both in manner and disposition. Those who were more immediately connected with him in Missionary work, and had constant opportunities of intercourse with him, ever felt that in him they had a true and warm-hearted Christian friend. There was no restraint in their feelings towards him, or their communications with him, but while rendering "honor to whom honor was due," they were encouraged by his uniform bearing, to regard him with more than usual affection and esteem. Their reminiscences of their venerated and now lamented friend will long remain with them, and will be precious to them as they tread this wilderness-world without him.

Without him—are to the speaker, at least, suggestive, painful, affecting words. *Without him*,—and whither has he gone?—To other scenes and associations than the present. His disembodied spirit has entered the unseen world, and stood in the presence of that dear Saviour, in whose service he engaged on earth, from his early years to the close of life; and how great the change!—how solemn the transition! The dear friend with whom we were once and long familiar, has become the witness and the subject of those great and solemn realities, of which he was wont to discourse to us within these walls, and in the hearing of multitudes of this people. Were it possible for him to convey to those whom he has left behind, even a remote idea of what are now his actual thoughts and feelings!—His impressions, his understanding, his emotions how enlarged! how vivid!—and the objects—unspeakable! Changed, altogether changed, we cannot suppose him to be, but O how altered! Accepted as we humbly trust, in Him in whom he believed,—arrayed in the righteousness of the saints,—separated from all imperfection and sin,—in what beatific employments is he engaged!—in what songs of thanksgiving and praise has he joined!—what a renewal of old Christian associations, and what an extension of the sacred circle with the whole assembly of the saved! and what increased per-

ception of the Divine works and ways,—of Redeeming grace and mercy,—of heavenly glory and felicity! But we forbear.—“For eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the mind of man to conceive, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.” Only as a follower of the Lamb, a faithful servant of Christ, we are warranted to entertain these exalted ideas of the present blessedness of the departed. Appropriately at the close of the week, he ceased from his labours on earth, and we are left to cherish the hope, that as with the other saints of the Lord, the transcendent happiness of the sabbath-rest above is now his ineffable and everlasting portion. Though at the end of his course here below, he was unable from physical causes to give any particular indication of the influence and expectation of his Christian faith, the best and appropriate proof that we could have of its reality and results, was the life he lived and the principles he entertained, during many long years of Christian devotedness. His end on earth though not triumphant, was peace; and our tears are dried, and our hearts are consoled, by the humble yet confident assurance, that he has been admitted into the joy of his Lord. “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.”

What remains is for us to improve the solemn event.

“Lives of great men all remind us,

We can make our lives sublime,

And departing, leave behind us

Foot-prints on the sands of Time.”

There is interest, deep interest in the subject thus suggested to us. We need not speculate on the mysterious operation of the law of influence. It obtains in all departments and throughout the entire range of inanimate being. Wherever material relations exist,—and they are co-extensive with the numberless objects in the universe,—there are all—pervading influences at work, which bind them together in harmony and union. And further, it is one of the axioms of physical science that no influence, however small, when once exerted is ever lost, but extends itself to the utmost bounds of the system, and is perpetuated to the remotest age, although, it may be, utterly unappreciable by us. But this principle especially obtains in the world of mind,—in the relations subsisting between man and man, and in the influence which holds them in close and dependant

association. This is not only the case between living men, but to a far greater extent between the living and the dead, by reason of the continuity of the connexion, and the numberless lines stretching from the one to the other, along which flow without a moment's intermission, influences the most mysterious and profound. The one indeed is nearly altogether formed on the other. There is very little real originality in any age, or nation, or individual;—all is mainly the complicated result of what preceded it, brought down and concentrated in succeeding times and persons and places. What would any one or any people be, without those anterior influences bearing upon them? The character, civilization and Christian aspect of any one age, are by no means wholly or chiefly determined by that age itself, but are moulded and confirmed by the concurrent influence of bye-gone days, which again is similarly acted on, and so transmitted to future generations. Each, the humblest member of humanity is fulfilling his part in promoting this general effect, and giving a stamp and bearing to the age in which he lives, and to the aspect of after times. But the influence here referred to is more marked and manifest, in the case of those, who have occupied a prominent position in the onward course of the world's affairs; or perhaps not so much with them, as with the great and good men of the earth,—the patriarchs, prophets and apostles, who, though humble and insignificant in their own view, were designed and appointed by the Great Ruler over all to fulfil a high and important trust, the influence of which has been mightily felt in determining the spirit and cast of all future time. And there have been men in our own days, men of God, appointed by God, honored of God in carrying out a great work, such as the evangelization of a vast Empire like China,—and who have left behind them impressions of their influence that will remain permanent, and continue to be powerfully felt and widely acknowledged. We hesitate not to assign such a position to our lamented friend. His whole course from first to last was one of continuous and availing effort for the good of China. While he lived, he spoke and acted only with this intent, and now that he is dead, his influence abides and will abide for aye. It will ever be said of him, that he “though dead yet speaketh.” And his voice, though no more heard by the outward ear, will be a great, a living, and an effectual one in the midst and minds of multitudes of this people. That spiritual voice,—those grand utterances are not and will not be buried with him, but will

continue to live and live on, and be heard and understood, and through the Divine Blessing, be acted on, long after those who yet remain shall have also ceased from the earth. The improvement that we would have each other to make of this, *the yet living voice* of our departed friend, is to listen to it,—to imitate him in the example of Christian devotedness and Christian piety he has left behind, (in so far as it resembled the highest and alone perfect order of Christian example, that of Christ)—and endeavour to make this voice and example by our own reiteration of it, tell in the ears and the eyes, the hearts and the lives of this great people.

But my Hearers, there is still another voice of our departed friend to be listened to, and it is a peculiarly solemn and affecting one. *It is his voice from the tomb.* Life however prolonged here below, will come to a close. “The fathers where are they, and the prophets do they live for ever?” The very last time Dr. Medhurst addressed us from this pulpit is as fresh in our recollection as yesterday. The subject was impressive, the necessity of being prepared for the coming of the Bridegroom. Many were deeply impressed on that occasion with the searching and solemn character of his appeals. It was in view of the present, most appropriate, and the whole subject has received a confirmation in him who was then the preacher. The same awaits us. May we take heed, have our lamps well supplied, have our professions of Christianity sustained by genuine Christian experience; and when we too are called away, may it be also into the gracious presence of our Lord, to receive His smile, to hear His welcome, and to enter the association and fellowship of them that are saved. “Work while it is called to-day; the night cometh wherein no man can work.” Carry on my dear Brethren that great cause in China, which has been deprived of the aid and service of our lamented friend. Its interests you are required to promote, and as a reward for faithful and assiduous labour on your part, may the crown of life be finally bestowed on you, by Him who is your Lord and Master.

In conclusion, the family of the deceased craves our deepest sympathy. They will have it, I am sure, from the hearts of all present and of many besides. And may the Father of all mercies and the God of all comfort richly impart to them His own Divine consolations,—guide and bless the widow and the fatherless

during their remaining days and months and years in this wilderness-world, and finally bring them one by one to the fellowship of the just,—an undivided family in heaven.

“Thou art gone to the grave! but we will not deplore thee,
Though sorrows and darkness encompass the tomb;
Thy Saviour has pass'd through its portals before thee,
And the lamp of His love is thy guide through the gloom.

Thou art gone to the grave! we no longer behold thee,
Nor tread the rough path of the world by thy side;
But the wide arms of Mercy are spread to enfold thee,
And sinners may die for the Sinless has died.

Thou art gone to the grave! and its mansion forsaking,
Perchance thy weak spirit in fear linger'd long;
But the mild rays of Paradise beam'd on thy waking,
And the sound which thou heard'st was the Seraphim's Song.

Thou art gone to the grave! but we will not deplore thee,
Whose God was thy ransom, thy guardian and guide;
He gave thee, He took thee, and He will restore thee,
And death has no sting, for the Saviour has died!”

Farewell, Christian Brother,—Father,—Friend, we shall no more
see thee on earth, may we all meet thee in Heaven.—AMEN.